

October 12, 2009

OBEY REVIEWS PLANS FOR NORTHCENTRAL TECHNICAL COLLEGE'S WOOD TECHNOLOGY CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE

ANTIGO, WI – Seventh District Congressman Dave Obey (D-WI) was in Antigo today to meet with Northcentral Technical College officials and local business leaders about how they will be using federal grant money for the newly planned Wood Technology Center For Excellence on the NTC-Antigo campus.

The new center – a collaborative partnership between NTC, Langlade County, the City of Antigo and area businesses – is designed to fill a major need in the region by providing up-to-date workforce training and skills necessary to remain competitive in the manufacture of wood products. “I am glad to be here to see first-hand NTC’s plans for the Wood Technology Center For Excellence,” said Obey. “These are tough economic times but they will pass. We need to use this time to prepare the region and make the right investments in training workers to be ready.”

In August, Northcentral Technical College received a \$1.28 million Economic Development Administration (EDA) federal grant to help with the construction of the center. Last year, NTC received \$1.9 million in a three-year grant from the Employment Training Administration (ETA) at the U.S. Department of Labor to cover curriculum development and staffing costs at the new center. The funding for these efforts came through legislation produced by the House Appropriations Committee which Obey chairs.

Wood products manufacturing is the strongest sector in North Central Wisconsin, employing more than 8,700 people and generating annual payroll of \$270 million. Locating the Wood Technology Center For Excellence near Northern Wisconsin’s abundant forestry resources ensures that the growing demands of the industry will be met. The facility will serve Forest, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Oneida, Portage, Vilas and Wood counties.

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